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SLOVAK PLAN FULFILLMENT IN 1951 AND 1952

On 8 February 1952, the expanded presidium of the central action committee of the Slovak National Front met to discuss methods for the fulfillment of the goals of the 4th year (1952) of the Five-Year Plan.

The meeting was attended by the chairman of the central action committee of the Slovak National Front, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Viliam Siroky; general secretary of the central action committee of the Slovak National Front and chairman of the Slovak National Council, F. Kubac; chairman of the Board of Commissioners, J. Duris; chairman of the Central Trade Union Council, Representative F. Zupka; deputy general secretary of the central action committee of the National Front of Czechs and Slovaks, J. Felcman; secretaries of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Slovakia, J. Pull and M. Gosiorovsky; and other members of the presidium of the central action committee of the Slovak National Front.

Siroky addressed the meeting as follows:

Slovak industrial production in 1952 will rise by more than 26 percent, equaling the 1937 figure. The output of heavy industry will increase by approximately 40 percent over 1951. Important increases are also planned in agricultural production, primarily in animal husbandry. This will be a significant step toward reducing the disparity between the increase in industrial production and the present level of agricultural production, particularly in Slovakia. The extent of capital construction in Slovakia is to be increased significantly; 39 new factories will be in operation and 50 important installations completed in existing factories during 1952.

A report of the Slovak Statistical Office on the fulfillment of the plan in 1951 states that industrial output increased last year by 19.5 percent, while production of heavy industry increased by 36.3 percent. Thus, last year, a level 3½ times that of 1937 was reached in industrial production in Slovakia.

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Despite these results, however, serious shortcomings in plan fulfillment were evident, particularly in the important sectors of coal mining, iron-ore mining, and industrial plant production.

The main shortcomings and obstacles to the fulfillment of the plan last year were that such socialist principles of organization and operation of production as personal responsibility, strict efficiency, political and planning discipline, criticism and self-criticism, payment according to the quality and quantity of work done, and the development of socialist competition were not introduced into the economy on a sufficient scale.

While industrial production in Czechoslovakia during 1951 was about two-thirds higher than in 1937, and in Slovakia about $3\frac{1}{2}$ times greater than in 1937, agricultural and animal production continues at about the prewar level. Last year, there was an increase in crop and livestock production in the cooperative sector which, together with the state farms, comprised 25.4 percent of the arable land in Slovakia. Nevertheless, the management of these enterprises was unsatisfactory.

The goals of the agricultural production plan for Slovakia have been increased 25.5 percent over last year.

Mechanization in construction, forestry, agriculture, and primarily in mining has increased considerably. However, if mechanization were properly understood everywhere, machines would not be so criminally misused in all sectors, there would not be such a high rate of breakdowns, machines would not be so neglected, and Soviet machinery would be more fully utilized. In certain sectors, particularly in the machine and tractor stations, the utilization of machinery was worse than in 1951.

Along with the growth in labor productivity, a rise in wages and salaries is planned.

The above-mentioned report of the Slovak Statistical Office shows that last year, a further rise in the living standard of the workers was recorded. In industry alone, wages and salaries rose by 23.5 percent over 1950, and the income of the rest of the population rose in proportion. For this reason, retail turnover in commerce increased 40 percent. Thus, the people in Slovakia received 28.5 percent more milk on the controlled market and 113.1 percent more milk on the free market than in 1950. A similar rise in the consumption of many other food and industrial products such as sugar, butter, eggs, etc., took place.

The improved living conditions which the People's Democratic regime has already created in Slovakia are reflected in the excess of live births over deaths. This natural population increase went from 8.6 [per thousand] in 1937 to 16.9 in 1950, and 17 in 1951, which is almost double. Whereas the natural population increase in 1937 was 30,355, in 1951, it totaled 59,500. Infant mortality, which is still high in Slovakia, has been reduced from 149 [per thousand] in 1937 to 103 in 1950.

There are about 10,000 students in Slovak institutes of higher learning and about 40,000 in industrial schools and basic specialist schools. Other courses are available to workers, and recently, night schools have been introduced.

With the steady rise in the living standard, the leaders of the National Front are faced with the task of organizing food supplies for workers. Last year, there were some difficulties, although over-all deliveries of food were greater than in the previous year. The only exception was in pork; because of lagging animal production and insufficient purchases, the plan for deliveries of pork for consumers could not be fulfilled. One of the causes of this failure was the rationing system. Certain changes have been introduced in the existing

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system, on the basis that food rationing, though unavoidable today, is a transitional and emergency method of distributing food. Therefore, efforts must be directed not toward extending, but toward reducing and liquidating the rationing system.

The government originally operated on the principle of adapting the ration system to the socialist principle of reward according to merit. Later, it became necessary to combat shortages and irregularities in the issuance of ration cards and to discontinue their distribution to those who produce or can produce enough food for themselves. This was all necessary not only from the viewpoint of supply, but also because the mistakes and shortcomings in the ration system have an unfavorable influence on the development of the unified agricultural cooperatives where the number of nonworking members has multiplied. It also had a bad effect on recruitment of manpower for production.

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